

Maertens

Serial No. **09/899,302**

March 26, 2003

IN THE CLAIMS

Amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-23 (Canceled).

24. (currently amended) A An isolated polynucleic acid specifically hybridizing with a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 55 to SEQ ID NO: 81, under conditions allowing discrimination of up to 1 nucleotide mismatch, or the complement thereof.

25. (currently amended) An isolated HCV virus characterized by any of the 5' UTR nucleotide sequences selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 55 to 81.

26. (new) A polynucleic acid specifically hybridizing with a sequence selected from the group consisting of a nucleic acid sequence encoding any of SEQ ID NO: 82 to SEQ ID NO:92, under conditions allowing discrimination of up to 1 nucleotide mismatch, or the complement thereof.

27. (new) An HCV virus characterized by any of the HCV NS5 nucleotide sequences selected from the group consisting of a nucleic acid sequence encoding any of SEQ ID NO: 82 to SEQ ID NO: 92.